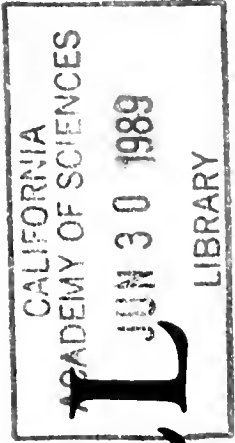


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THE GULL

Golden Gate Audubon Society Berkeley, California Volume 71 Number 7 July/August 1989

BAY-DELTA HEARINGS

The long-delayed Bay-Delta Hearings are finally beginning to get back on track. This is good news for the Bay Area. The San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary is not only the environmental and economic core of the Bay Area, but a resource of state and national significance. Unfortunately, though the Hearings were designed to address serious problems in the Estuary, improved standards are not assured. In fact, without strong public support, the Estuary may not receive improved protections at all.

The Bay-Delta Hearings were convened in 1987 by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) in order to set new protective water quality standards for the Bay-Delta Estuary. More protective standards are clearly needed. More than half the water that historically flowed through the Estuary has been diverted by water projects. As much as 85% is diverted in the spring months which are so critical for fish. Much of the water is diverted upstream and never reaches the Delta. More is pumped out of the Delta by the giant state and federal projects for export primarily to Central Valley agriculture and Southern California cities. These diversions and exports have had a devastating impact upon the Estuary, causing among other things:

- increased salt intrusion into the Delta. The export pumps are so strong and freshwater flows so low that salty water is often pulled upstream into the Delta drinking water supplies.
- drastic reductions in the natural populations of salmon, striped bass, and numerous other species. Last spring, massive pumping of water for agriculture during the drought virtually wiped out all of 1988's young "stripers." The striped bass index fell to a historic low.
- reduced production of the phytoplankton that form the base of the aquatic food chain.

(continued on page 103)

THE STATE OF THE CHAPTER

If the past year is any indication, and it *is*, GGAS is a very healthy, vibrant chapter, full of energetic, active volunteers committed to the Audubon cause. Thanks to our own very able, professional staff person Barbara, who's always there with her winning smile, our chapter managed to move to a new, more desirable location. Thanks to our active board of directors, GGAS has fought more aggressively on the conservation front, in the courts, and in the public arena,



succeeding more than ever to defend our threatened wetlands. Our standing committee chairmen deserve a big round of applause: Arthur Feinstein (Conservation) writes letter after letter, makes constant phone calls, attends endless meetings, all to assert in his articulate way our point of view in support of the environment; our Finance chairman, Steve Margolin has organized our budget on a sound fiscal footing; Joelle Buffa has presented lively, stimulating monthly programs that have attracted record audiences on both sides of the Bay; Helen Green provides us with a complete, accurate observations column and works with Joe Morlan to make sure that our rare-bird alert is up to date; Russ Wilson has organized our field trips so efficiently that he even managed one for a busload of out-of-town psychiatrists; and, if it weren't for our admirable *Gull* editor, Don Sanford, you wouldn't even be reading this or be informed about the multitude of issues, news stories that our newsletter features. The list of thanks and appreciation could extend forever; instead, please know, all you six thousand GGAS members out there, that your chapter has been in capable hands.

Beyond the day-to-day business that keeps the chapter working, GGAS has had an exciting, colorful year. If anything has characterized this in tangible form, it's been our wonderful wetlands quilt. Lovingly wrought by an expert team of quilters, with a design concept of wetlands flora and fauna by Helen Green, this work of art has brought more people together, reached out with its environmental message to

more citizens of the Bay Area, raised more money than ever imagined, gotten more people involved (thank you, Mildred Bennett). In short, our quilt was a hit, made a splash, had an impact. The quilt helped us get the word out: S.F. Bay's wetlands are in extreme danger; they are vital to the ecosystem; GGAS intends to fight with legal action, education, political leverage to protect them.

Another concrete manifestation of GGAS's commitment to wetlands protection is our series of notecards, which we produced this year. Thanks to artist Debbie Cotter's gorgeous renderings of wetland birds, and further thanks to Leora Feeney's efforts toward this project, GGAS has another tool for raising funds and for educating the public about our crusade.

This past year has seen victories amidst defeats. While devastating oil spills in Alaska and in the Carquinez Straits have depressed us, still we can be encouraged by our successes in preventing the Port of Oakland from illegal fill of wetlands, and in stalling the City of Alameda from constructing a ferry landing in critical habitat. Although Mono Lake's water level continues to lower at an alarming rate, still we are hopeful that recent court decisions will reverse a situation that will be an ecological disaster. Old growth forests continue to be cut down at a furious pace, but the spotted owl is near to being declared an endangered species. In addition, we can be thankful that the election process in our political system still gets results, for without it we would not have seen the passage of two propositions, 70 on the state level and AA on the local level, that will help insure

the protection of habitat for future generations. Finally, another victory that we have worked so hard towards is the expansion of S.F. Bay Refuge, now more of a reality thanks to Congressman Don Edwards' leadership on the congressional level.

Many of GGAS's members have been involved in these issues. Some of our members have donated money to our legal fund. Bruce Walker, our first vice president worked tirelessly to gather signatures to put the above propositions on the ballot. Several of us formed teams to compete in our Birdathon, for which we gathered pledges, birded from dawn to dusk, and raised over \$4600 (and still counting) for Mono Lake and for GGAS's various programs. Many of us have participated in birdcounts, gathering necessary data to prove how vital our wetlands are to birds on the Pacific Flyway. Your chapter has pledged money to encourage the East Bay Regional Park District to purchase vital wetland habitat.

As you can see, it's been an exciting, challenging year, but GGAS rose to its demands with spirit, determination, panache. Our work is never done; indeed it becomes more complex and more necessary every year. As your president, I look forward to next year and ask that as many of you as can will join GGAS to further our cause for the environment. Join us. Volunteer. Do your bit. You'll learn a lot, have fun, meet interesting people, and help our world.

—TOM WHITE
President

ADIOS, DIRECTOR JOHN NUTT

GGAS's Board wishes you all the best and extends its warmest appreciation for all the effort and work, time and energy, concern and expertise you have contributed in your six years on our board.

We will miss your warm, wry sense of humor, not to forget your original point of view, which helped make our board meetings so memorable. You have been a true, blue volunteer, one who helped produce GGAS's first tee shirt, the dark blue Gull series, plus the 200th birthday Audubon commemorative button. Finally, your devotion to Lake Merritt conservation issues, assisting Paul Covell, has proved invaluable and will never be forgotten.

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Sunday, July 9—Chimney Rock, Pt. Reyes. Join us for our annual trip to see nesting Black Oystercatchers and Western Gulls. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters, approximately one mile northwest of Olema. We will caravan to the coast. Bring a lunch, liquids, and a scope if you have one. Leader: Darrell Hall (527-8826).

Saturday–Sunday, July 29–30—Yosemite High Sierra Ecology. For those who like hiking, beautiful scenery, flowers, trees, and geology—in addition to birds—meet us at 8:45 a.m. on Saturday, July 29 in the May Lake Parking area off the Tioga Pass Road for an all day hike to May Lake and the top of Mt. Hoffmann, with a spectacular 360° view of the high mountain scenery. Though we go slowly, this is a good climb up to 10,850 ft. elevation, so you will need both stamina and some reasonable ability to hike at high altitudes. Bring plenty of liquids, a lunch, sun-screen, hat, daypack, and good hiking boots or footwear with adequate tread.

On Sunday we will meet at 8:45 a.m. at the junction of the Tioga Pass Road and the Saddlebag Lake Road several miles east of Tioga Pass on the way down to Mono Lake. We will be hiking in the general vicinity with the intent of returning to our cars by 2:30 or 3 p.m.

for the drive home. You will need all the same gear as Saturday, but elevation gain will be much less. It is possible we will take the boat taxi across Saddlebag Lake, for which there would be a small fee.

Campgrounds are available at Tuolumne Meadows (most central location), Porcupine Flat, White Wolf and Crane Flat within the Park, and at a number of locations between Tioga Pass and Lee Vining at Forest Service Campgrounds. Lodging is possible at Tuolumne Meadows High Sierra Camp and a number of motels in Lee Vining: Best Western Lakeview Motel (619/647-6543), Gateway Motel (619/647-6467), and Murphy's Motel (619/647-6316).

Keep in mind that driving time from Lee Vining to the May Lake parking lot is around one hour. For further information call leader George Peyton weekdays at (415) 444-3131. \$(✓)

Saturday, August 12—Moss Landing. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Marina Parking Lot. Go south on Hwy. 101 to Moss Landing. Turn right (just beyond the PG&E station) at the road to the Marina Science Lab. The parking lot is just before the one lane bridge. We will be looking for early migrating shorebirds and Elegant Terns. Bring snacks and beverages. This trip will end about noon. Leader: Don Starks (408/226-4134). (✓)

Thursday–Sunday, August 24–27—Backpacking trip in Lassen Volcanic National Park. We will backpack in three miles to Snag Lake and spend three nights in primitive camping by a stream near a large meadow. We should see a mixed flock of warblers and other songbirds that summer in Lassen, resident birds of the mountains, and perhaps some migrating shorebirds. We will be in beautiful country! Everyone will be responsible for his/her own gear and food, although some cooperative

meals may be arranged. This trip is limited to 12 people. For details call David Rice (527-7210). Leaders: David Rice, Robin Pulich and Frank Lowe. \$(✓)

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓).

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (524-2399).

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

PSYCHIATRISTS ARE FOR THE BIRDS

Early in May nearly 15,000 psychiatrists from the American Psychiatric Association descended on San Francisco for their annual convention. They had given advance notice to GGAS that a bus load of their members chose "Birding in San Francisco" as one of their extra curricular activities. Their question: Could we supply four leaders who would be willing to meet the bus at 6:30 a.m. in mid-week and spend four hours birding the hot spots of San Francisco? To the rescue came Mary Louise Rosegay, Steve Bailey, Alan Hopkins and Donna Lion. They delighted the visitors with a variety of habitats: Lincoln Park, Seal Rocks and Golden Gate Park that produced sightings of more than 40 species. The visitors' reaction was that San Francisco has it all: from Green-backed Herons and Red-shouldered Hawks to Black Oystercatchers, Pigeon Guillemots, Pygmy Nuthatches and Red Crossbills.

Our thanks to the leaders who took time from their busy schedules to share their knowledge and expertise. We also appreciate that, as a fund-raiser, the event generated \$300 for GGAS.

—RUSS WILSON

OBSERVATIONS

April 26 through May 22

News from SE Farallon

Most Farallon breeding birds were incubating and feeding young by early May. However, species most sensitive to sea temperatures and ocean food supply—Pigeon Guillemots and Pelagic Cormorants, for instance—started later than usual. This was cause for concern to island biologists who feared the Pelagics, at least, might not breed successfully at all. Some early waves of landbirds arrived April 14–18, 29–30, and May 9 and 15. (All SE Farallon Island data here and below are for the period March 26–May 19 and are courtesy PRBO.)

Waterbirds

Two Laysan Albatrosses, were seen from a research vessel which ranged up to 130 miles west of San Mateo Co. April 29–30 (SFB). **Ninety-eight Murphy's Petrels** and **one hundred thirteen Cook's Petrels** were identified on that trip as well (SFB). Three **Murphy's Petrels** and another seven dark *Pterodroma* species (most probably **Murphy's**) were found on a pelagic trip 15–17 miles offshore from Fort Bragg May 6 (KFC). One Pink-footed Shearwater was seen from SE Farallon April 25, and two were found on a pelagic trip out of Monterey May 13 (TCo).

Twenty-five White-faced Ibis were flying over Interstate 880 just north of Santa Clara Co. line May 4 (SAL). Another flock of sixteen landed in the Palo Alto Flood Control basin May 12 (PJM).

An immature male **King Eider** was found in a large Surf Scoter flock at Pomponio State Beach April 29 (MLR), and continued there through May 7 (JM, RKO, RSTh). The male Harlequin Duck at Bolinas Lagoon was last reported May 12 (KH), and one was seen at Ano Nuevo Point May 13 (PJM). A Sandhill Crane visited Kent

Island in Bolinas Lagoon May 12 (KH).

Four Lesser Golden-Plovers were still at Spaletta Plateau April 27 (BHo), and another two were seen at Ano Nuevo Pt. May 13 (PJM). Two breeding plumaged Baird's Sandpipers, unusual in spring in our area, were found in Marin Co. this period: one at Mendoza Ranch pond April 28 (*fide* KH), and one at Bolinas Lagoon May 6 (RS, *fide* AD). A Pectoral Sandpiper was a Moonglow Dairy May 13 (TCo).

Two Pomarine Jaegers were seen from land: one at SE Farallon April 23–24 and another from Pomponio State Beach April 30 (RSTh). An immature Glaucous Gull was feeding among Elephant Seals at Ano Nuevo Island to April 30 (GJS). A Black Tern reached Alameda South Shore May 4 (DaJ, RJ). **One hundred thirty-six Horned Puffins** were seen from the research vessel off San Mateo Co. April 29–30 (SFB), and another was found on the pelagic trip out of Fort Bragg May 6 (KFC).

Landbirds

A swift of the genus *Cheatura*, almost certainly a Chimney Swift, reached SE Farallon May 15. Costa's Hummingbirds are being seen regularly in Del Puerto Canyon each spring, but one male below the south entrance to Mt. Diablo May 5 (THK) was more unusual. A female Pileated Woodpecker was near the Sunset Picnic Area on Mt. Diablo May 7 (RJR). (A pair of these woodpeckers was found on Mt. Diablo last June!)

Two pair of Purple Martins were at Five Brooks, a known breeding area, May 13 (DSg). A Sage Thrasher was found in a weedy area near Robert's Landing in San Leandro May 14 (RJR). The SE Farallon Brown Thrasher was last recorded May 4 but believed to be still lurking about.

A breeding plumaged Palm Warbler was reported from Lake Merced in San Francisco April 25 (AGa). SE Farallon

had a Black-and-white Warbler April 18–20. The American Redstart at Middle Lake, Golden Gate Park, was last noted April 25 (SCx). A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was found at a Presbyterian Church in Lafayette April 30 (MG), and another was seen at the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse May 19 (RS).

A Green-tailed Towhee was near the Blue Oak Picnic Area, Mt. Diablo May 4 (JE). A clay-colored Sparrow reached SE Farallon May 15. Two pair of Red Crossbills, always a surprise because of their roving habits, were at Five Brooks May 13 (DSg). Another male Red Crossbill was along Melville Dr., Oakland May 16–19 (SLS). Lawrence's Goldfinches are abundant this year in Alameda and Contra Costa Cos. at locations where they are expected. More surprising were reports of Lawrence's in a flock of American Goldfinches on Lucas Valley Road April 30 (PEG), and two pair on Pine Flat Road in Sonoma Co. May 22 (DN).

Observers: Alexander Gaguine (AGa), Stephen F. Bailey, Kurt F. Campbell, Terry Colborn (TCO), Scott Cox (SCx), Ann Dewart, Jimm Edgar, Philip E. Gordon, Marguerite Grissette, Keith Hansen, Bob Hogan (BHO), Robert Jerrell, Dannie Jones (DaJ), Ted H Koundakjian, Richard Kovak (RKO), Stephen A. Laymon, Peter J. Metropulos, Joseph Morlan, Dan Nelson, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (thanks to George E. Wallace), Robert J. Richmond, Mary Louise Rosegay, Dan Singer (DSg), Rich Stallcup, Gary J. Strachan, Sylvia L. Sykora, Ron S. Thorn (RSTh).

Please report observations to Northern California Rare Bird Alert: 528-0288 or 524-5592.

—HELEN GREEN

Observations Editor

2001 Yolo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707

CONSERVATION NOTES

FARALLON THREAT

A recent 600% increase in commercial abalone and urchin fishing near Southeast Farallon Island has posed growing threats of disturbance to protected wildlife and marine ecosystem. Point Reyes Bird Observatory has urged partial closures of these fisheries within a one-mile radius of the Farallon Island National Wildlife Refuge. As the largest seabird and marine mammal rookery in the continental US, the Farallones support hundreds of thousands of marine mammals and seabirds, key indicators of the health of the marine environment. With the nesting season for Farallon seabirds near its peak, said their May bulletin, potential chick mortality due to disturbance in their colonies is a major consideration for the Refuge. Based on PRBO data on the disturbances caused by the urchin and abalone fishing, the California Dept. of Fish and Game has granted a request from the US Fish and Wildlife Service for a temporary emergency closure. The Farallon Islands was closed to all urchin and abalone diving during the second week of each month throughout the season.

PRBO, steward of the Farallones Refuge for USFWS, has monitored the effects of fisheries on seabirds and marine mammals for many years. PRBO data documented the impacts of gill nets and was instrumental in effecting a change in their use. As demand for abalone and sea urchin has risen, increasing numbers of dive boats working very near the islands have disturbed sensitive seabirds, especially Common Murres and Brandt's Cormorants, as well as California sea lions. Under federal and state protection, Farallon wildlife is recovering from past devastation due to commercial harvesting and oil spills, among other factors. New pressures, such as the current urchin

and abalone fishery, require new protective measures.

While closely monitoring the effectiveness of this year's temporary closures, PRBO has strongly recommended permanent protection for the Farallones, urging USFWS and CDFG to close waters within one mile of the islands to abalone and urchin diving each year from March 15 to August 15, the seabird's peak breeding season.

MONO LAKE UPDATE

The Mono Lake Committee reports that in a landmark decision for the Mono Lake streams, the California Supreme Court on April 27, refused to review a January appellate court decision invalidating the LA Dept. of Water and Power's licenses to divert water from the Mono Basin. Around 50,000 acre-feet per year could be returned to the lake by this decision. (Scientists estimate about 70,000 acre-feet per year is necessary to stabilize Mono Lake at a healthy level.) However, it could take years for the State Water Resources Control Board to determine from studies the exact stream flows that will be required.

Meanwhile, Mono Lake is approaching critically low levels. Due to the imminent harm posed by LADWP's water diversions, the Mono Lake Committee and the National Audubon Society filed a motion on April 19 to keep Mono Lake at its present elevation through March 31, 1990. Martha Davis, speaking for the Mono Lake Committee, said "We will reevaluate the need for legal action to maintain the lake level next year. But for this year, Southern California has more than sufficient water supplies available, thanks to the Colorado River resources and the available savings created by the water conservation ordinance adopted last year by LA Mayor Tom Bradley and the City Council."

Bay Delta Hearings

(continued from page 97)

- a reduction in the natural circulation of the Estuary and its capacity to distribute nutrients and disperse contaminants. Pollution also can and should be attacked through reductions in waste discharges. But even if all discharges were to miraculously cease, the Estuary would still need inflows of fresh water to remain a healthy and viable habitat.

The Bay-Delta Hearings were originally designed to take place in three phases. In Phase I (1987), the SWRCB took testimony on the environmental needs of the Estuary and the needs of those who rely on the water flowing into the Estuary: cities, industry, agriculture, etc. Phase I resulted last November in two documents: the draft *Water Quality Control Plan for Salinity* and the draft *Pollution Policy Document*. The former set new protective standards for the water quality and flow needs of the Estuary, the latter updated state policy on the discharge of pollution into the Estuary. In Phase II, the SWRCB was to finalize the documents. The Hearings were to conclude with Phase III in 1989 with a water rights decision to enforce the *Water Quality Control Plan*.

The draft *Water Quality Control Plan for Salinity* was received with mixed feelings by Bay Area interests. The plan was disappointing in that it did not set any flow standards for the protection of San Francisco Bay. However, Bay Area groups were delighted with the proposal to give the Delta more water in the critical spring months for the protection of Delta habitat.

If Bay Area groups were ambivalent toward the standards, Central Valley and Southern California interests were openly hostile. Believing that the proposed increases in Delta flows in the

spring would threaten their present and future water supplies, they responded with a successful campaign for withdrawal of the draft *Water Quality Control Plan for Salinity*. The *Pollution Policy Document* (PPD) was not withdrawn, however, and is continuing on a faster track. Hearings on the PPD are scheduled to begin in August.

The withdrawal of the draft *Water Quality Control Plan* in January threw the Bay-Delta Hearings into confusion. Only now is the future of the Hearings coming back into focus. On April 20, the SWRCB released a *Draft Revised Workplan for the Hearing Process* containing a tentative plan of action for the rest of the Hearings. The Hearings on the *Water Quality Control Plan* have now been divided into four parts:

Phase I (1987-88)

Already completed.

Water Quality Phase (Nov. 1989-July 1990)

Set standards for the beneficial uses that can be protected by salinity and temperature control only.

Scoping Phase (1990-?)

Explore and select options for protecting the Estuary. This Phase includes: (1) examination of alternatives for the protection of beneficial uses not fully addressed in the Water Quality Phase (e.g., freshwater flows), (2) possible package deals involving facilities, negotiated compromises, legislation etc., (3) a program of implementation for the options, and (4) an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Water Rights Phase (?-1993?)

Implement the selected option. This may or may not involve changes in water rights, depending on what standards have been chosen and how they are implemented.

The draft Workplan is bad news for the Estuary. Though the final decision on protections for the Estuary cannot be known yet, the *structure* of the Hear-

ings appears to be biased in favor of the Central Valley and Southern California interests who killed the first attempt at standards.

Two crucial realizations were embodied in the original draft *Water Quality Control Plan*. The first realization was that **the Estuary cannot be fully protected unless the integrity of the entire habitat is protected**. The second was that **the health of the Estuary depends upon far more than just salinity levels**. In particular, the downstream surge of fresh water is crucial, regardless of the salinity level. Freshwater pulses carry young fish into the prime nursery grounds and away from the deadly pumps. Flows also help keep the waters of the Estuary circulating, bringing in nutrients and dispersing pollutants. One could easily imagine a situation in which salinity standards were met while the Estuary was dying.

Those two critical insights have been ignored in the draft Workplan. Freshwater flows will no longer be considered in the Water Quality Phase. Instead, they will be considered in the Scoping Phase merely as an option, along with hatcheries and other technical fixes, for the protection of the salmon and striped bass. **Gone is the insistence that all species deserve protection. Gone is the recognition that fresh water is the cornerstone of a healthy Estuary.** Thus, even before the second phase of the Hearings has begun, **the Estuary has been put at a serious disadvantage.**

Release of the new *Water Quality Control Plan for Salinity* is now scheduled for October 1989. Hearings on the Plan will begin in November. There is every reason to hope that better standards for the Estuary can be achieved. But good standards will not just happen. If Bay Area residents want improved standards, they must make

the necessary effort: writing letters to the SWRCB and elected officials, attending meetings, and continuing the self-education process.

What you can do: Comment on the draft Workplan. Ask that the SWRCB (1) reaffirm its commitment to protection of estuarine habitat, (2) detail in the Water Quality Control Plan the beneficial uses in the Estuary not fully protected by salinity and temperature control and (3) reinstate freshwater flows for estuarine protection. Send comments to David Beringer/Division of Water Rights/SWRCB/P.O. Box 2000/Sacramento, CA 95810. Call Leo Winternitz at (916) 324-5751 for a copy of the Workplan.

For more information or to request a presentation to your group on the Bay-Delta Hearings, call the Committee for Water Policy Consensus at (415) 682-6633.

—DAVID FULLERTON

DRILLING OFF OUR COAST?

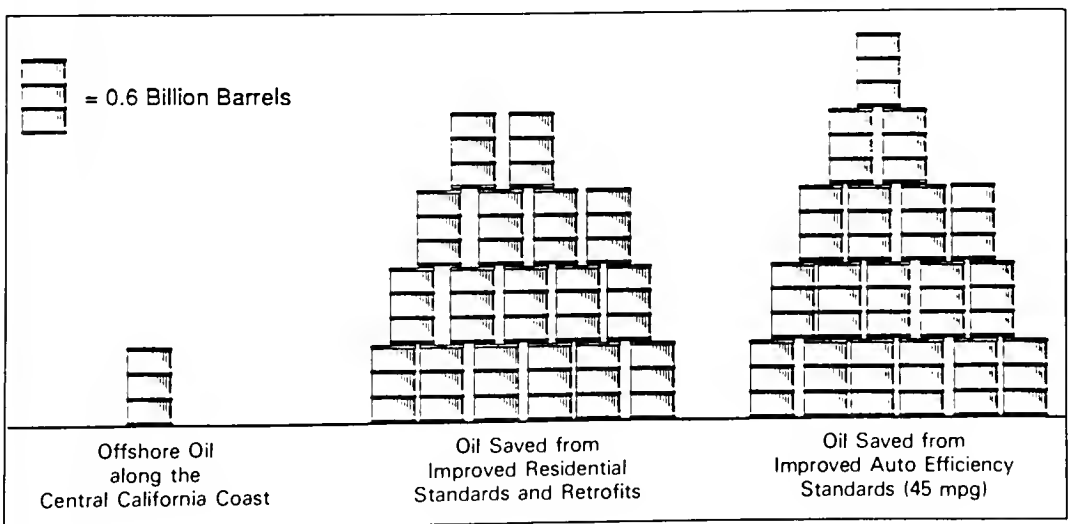
All the oil off the Central California Coast (about 600-million barrels) is only 1/16th of what we can save by improving residential energy consumption and just 1/18th of the savings achievable by improving automobile efficiency to

45 miles per gallon.

In the thirteen years following the 1973 Arab oil embargo, the United States made major improvements in its energy efficiency—increasing its output of goods and services by 40% while holding energy use close to 1973 levels. More efficient use of resources since the 1970s has cut the nation's annual bill for oil, gas, coal and nuclear power by an estimated \$160 billion. But recently the improvement has stopped.

Improved energy efficiency must remain a high national priority. Cutting energy use and costs in manufacturing allows U.S. companies to produce goods more cheaply, making them more competitive in world markets. **Efficient use of energy resources also helps reduce the U.S. trade deficit and dependence on foreign oil.** Oil imports now account for one-quarter of the U.S. trade deficit and over 40% of U.S. oil consumption. **Energy efficiency also helps protect the environment,** by reducing industrial and vehicle emissions that contribute to urban smog, acid rain and global warming.

In 1986, industrial energy use in the U.S. was 17% lower than in 1973, while production in the same period increased 17%. These gains were triggered by the growth of industries that consume less energy in production—



for example, computer electronics and software instead of steel and cement—and by the development of more efficient equipment and processes in energy-intensive industries such as oil refining and chemicals. In transportation, efficiency improvements were due to factors such as the doubling since 1973 of the government's average fuel economy standards for new cars and structural changes in jet airplanes that greatly reduced fuel needs. Better insulation of buildings and homes, as well as energy savings in heating and lighting systems, has also contributed to efficiency gains.

Yet, after increasing 24% between 1976 and 1986, energy efficiency in the U.S. stopped growing in 1987 and declined in 1988. As a result, **the U.S. today is one of the world's least energy-efficient industrial countries.** Japan and West Germany, for example, use only half as much energy to produce a unit of goods and services as does the U.S. The decline in U.S. efficiency in recent years is largely due to the collapse of oil prices in 1986, which has reduced the incentive to save energy. Gasoline costs less today in constant dollars, than it did before the oil embargo in 1973. Other factors include government spending cuts during the 1980s. For example, federal energy efficiency programs were reduced by 70% and renewable energy research and development programs were cut 80%.

The success of Japan and European nations indicates that American efficiency levels can be significantly improved. **In the U.S., as much energy leaks through windows every year as flows through the Alaska pipeline.** Foreign auto makers—now producing some cars that get over 50 miles per gallon (mpg) and developing prototypes that average 70 mpg—are leading efforts to redesign engines and transmissions and to increase use of lighter-

weight aluminum, steel alloys and plastics. In manufacturing, energy efficient technologies—such as continuous steel casting—are becoming more widely available. Some utilities are now using “least-cost” services to meet energy demands, installing highly efficient electrical equipment for their customers instead of investing in new generating plants.

Other steps could be taken to promote conservation and efficiency. The Congress should consider toughening energy performance standards for cars, trucks and buildings; stimulating the production of ultra-efficient cars by purchasing them for government fleets; imposing a tax on gas guzzling cars; improving energy efficiency in federal buildings and federally assisted housing; expanding federal assistance to states for home weatherization programs; boosting commercialization of promising federal energy research and creating an acid rain control program.

The House Subcommittee on Water, Power and Offshore Energy Resources, which I chair, is responsible for energy issues involving new domestic production of oil and gas, including offshore leasing and the potential development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska.

These highly controversial issues pit irreplaceable natural resources against the energy, and security, needs of our nation. All of the oil in ANWR, under the most likely scenario, would provide just one year's worth of our domestic energy needs.

As we in California know, opening any sensitive areas to oil drilling is highly controversial. Before that step is undertaken, we owe it to future generations to assure that energy resources are produced, and consumed, in the most environmentally and economically sound manner.

—GEORGE MILLER
Representative, 7th District

BACK YARD BIRDER

In most species of birds, the differences between male and female is quite obvious. Most baby birds look alike, but upon maturity they differ in size, plumage, colors and, when adults, the sexes exhibit different songs and breeding behavior. These secondary sexual characteristics are called sexual dimorphism. (Primary sexual characteristics are testis in the male and ovary in the female).

Generally, male birds are more colorful and are larger than females, but in shorebirds and especially in birds of prey, the relative size of male and female is "reverse sexual size dimorphism." Hawks, falcons and eagles sport different plumage but owl and vulture males and females appear almost the same with the female being slightly larger. Years ago the Lindsay Museum had a pair of Barn Owls named Julie and John. They courted, mated and embarrassed the experts when John was the one who laid the eggs! A current museum resident, a Turkey Vulture named Lord Richard, may, in fact, be Lady Richard. He/she recently gained short-lived freedom where he soared above Larkey Park, eventually attracting several "wild" Turkey Vultures. (A vulture relies upon his brethren to help detect the next meal). Upon landing atop the museum, Richard was soon joined by an amorous suitor, a smaller bird who sidled toward Richard. Because Richard is imprinted upon humans and considers himself one of us, he was repulsed, so much so that he literally lost his grip, tumbling off the roof. He managed to gain some altitude before deciding he'd had enough of freedom and landed upon some unsuspecting museum visitor.

There are several plausible explana-

tions for the difference in size among raptors. In most species, the males are the aggressors during courtship. Since raptors are unusually aggressive birds and possess sharp talons and beaks, perhaps female raptors evolved with a preference for smaller, safer males. The female can dominate such a male and he will remain in his key role as food provider for both his mate and their young. Sharp-shinned Hawks, which mainly hunt birds, show aggression quickly and would, in theory present a great threat to their mates, so these types of raptors exhibit the greatest size difference.

Another possible explanation for reverse size sexual dimorphism is that the two sexes will hunt different prey, thus reducing competition for food. Since there is a wider range of available food, there will be plenty to feed the whole family.

Finally, the female raptor needs to be larger because she must accumulate reserves in order to produce eggs. And, while incubating the eggs and brooding the young, the female relies upon her mate to feed the whole family. Small, fleet prey, whether aerial or terrestrial, are more available than large, sluggish prey. So, small, agile males are better providers than larger ones. Logically, raptors which prefer larger, slower prey show very little size discrepancy between sexes. e.g. Vultures prefer unmoving carrion and the sexes are very nearly the same size.

It is interesting to conjecture why raptors exhibit these size differences. As with most theories of explanation for bird behavior or for bird evolution, there is no *one* answer. What I'd really like to know is what Lord Richard was thinking as that tall, dark stranger began to flirt with him/her!

—MEG PAULETICH

1989 MONO LAKE WORKSHOPS

Natural History Canoe Trips

(Adults \$8, children (4-12) \$5

(no one under 4, please)

Saturdays and Sundays until Sept. 3

Dave Potashin, guide.

Birds of the Mono Basin

July 15-16 Dave Shuford \$60

Geology of the Mono Basin

July 22-23 Jim Parker \$60

High Country Wildflowers

July 22-23 Dave DeSante \$60

Natural History of Mono Basin

July 28-30 Mark Bagley,
David Herbst, Jim Parker \$75*

Family Nature Overnight Backpack

July 29-30 Bob Roney \$90**

Human Ecology

July 29-30 Dave DeSante \$60

High Country Birds

Aug. 5-6 Dave DeSante \$60

Mono-Bodie Historical Tour

Aug. 26-27 Arlene Reveal \$60

Natural History Writing

Sept. 16-17 Lauren Davis \$60

Write to the Mono Lake Workshops, P.O. Box 153, Lee Vining, CA 93541 or phone (619) 647-6496 between 7:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. This activity is sponsored by the Mono Lake Foundation, a non-profit organization administered by a volunteer board, dedicated to preservation of the Mono Basin ecosystem through education and research.

*1.5 UC credits for this course:
\$25 additional cost.

**per family



**NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
ALASKA REGIONAL OFFICE**

M E M O

April 2, 1989

TO Peter Berle
FROM Dave Cline
RE Alaska Oil Spill

It's 2 a.m. I have just returned from Valdez to my office in Anchorage. As you requested, I have been monitoring the oil spill cleanup and the impacts of the spill on Prince William Sound and the wildlife there.

I simply don't have words to describe the overwhelming mess the oil companies have perpetrated on this pristine environment. If Alaska is nature at its best, the oil spill is man at his worst.

Anyone who cares about wildlife would be sickened at what I have seen. Walking on a two-mile stretch of beach, I saw more than 500 dead birds—20 species in all, including murrelets, cormorants, scoters, goldeneyes, eiders, and even eagles. I found four Bald Eagles dead on the beach. Their plumage was blackened by the thick oil which destroys the thermal insulation of their feathers, causing the birds to die of hypothermia. But you only see the birds that have managed to struggle to shore where they shiver to death. The majority of the dead—50% to 90%—you never see. For them, their oil-sodden plumage weights them down and losing buoyancy, they drown.

The worst may be yet to come. In the next two to three weeks, millions more birds will be arriving in Prince William Sound on their spring migration. It also occurs to me that in the nearby Copper River Delta, there will be some 5–20 million shorebirds. A shift of the wind could wash oil up onto the delta's banks, destroying the site of the largest congregation of shorebirds in the world. It scared the hell out of me to think of it.

Auduboners and other environmen-

talists by the hundreds have been calling the office, offering to work at rescuing birds and otters, I have been helping to coordinate their well-meaning efforts, but I fear that the job is overwhelming us.

The cleanup is not going well. Only about 3% of the oil has been recovered to date. Exxon did too little, too late. I'm no lawyer, but I would define Exxon's nearly complete lack of preparedness for a spill as criminal negligence. And these are the same people who are so eager to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Can we expect any better of them up there?

We have got to stop this kind of mess from every happening again. We have to fight the oil lobby in Congress. We have to prevent further oil spills and we have to stop the oil companies before they destroy the Arctic Refuge. To do it we'll need every one of Audubon's half-a-million members to help us in every way they can. Together, we can do the job. We've got to do it.

I'm tired. Good night.

EPA: TWO FORKS DAM

The Platte River, which flows from high in the Rocky Mountains through central Nebraska to the Missouri River, remains a river under siege. But one major cloud has lifted from the Platte's future. On March 24th EPA Administrator William Reilly announced his decision to start proceedings that could lead to a veto of the proposed Two Forks dam, an environmental and economic monstrosity that threatens to degrade internationally known wildlife habitat on the river.

Saving the Platte has been a National Audubon Society high priority campaign for more than two years and your commitment as members and activists has played a key role in this latest victory. Your letters, in concert with my

pleas and those of many environmental organizations, convinced Reilly to take a personal interest in Two Forks and to make it an issue of national importance. Credit especially must go to the people of Colorado and Nebraska, who corresponded in overwhelming numbers during the past two years with informed, articulate and impassioned opposition to Two Forks.

I applaud Administrator Reilly's wise and courageous decision. This was the first major environmental test for President Bush and his administration, and they have passed with flying colors. This action demonstrates that the new President is serious about establishing himself as an "environmental President." Under the process begun by Bill Reilly, the unacceptable adverse effects of Two Forks will become clear, making a veto of this project the only reasonable course of action.

I wish I could say that the demise of Two Forks means that the Platte River is "saved" forever, but I cannot. Two major water projects remain very much on the drawing boards—Prairie Bend in Nebraska and Deer Creek in Wyoming. Together they pose the most imminent threats to the river and its wildlife. In addition, there is an opportunity, through the relicensing of Nebraska's Kingsley Dam, to improve existing seasonal flows and better serve wildlife needs downstream. This action, pending before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, is crucial to a river that has lost 70% of its original flow.

Far from encouraging complacency, EPA's decision on Two Forks energizes National Audubon and its grass-roots activists for the long-term battle to protect the Platte.

—PETER A. A. BERLE
NAS President

GGAS TRIP: MONTEREY BAY

Sunday, Sept. 24 is the date set for a Monterey Bay pelagic trip. The cost is \$25 per person. Reservations can be made by mail, enclosing a check payable to GGAS and a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to us at 1250 Addison St. #107B, Berkeley, CA 94702.

SAN DIEGO PELAGIC TRIPS

Western Field Ornithologists announce trips Saturday, Sept. 9 and Sunday, Sept. 10 leaving at 5:30 a.m. and returning at 6 p.m. to explore the waters between San Diego and San Clemente Island. The boat, the *New Seaforth*, is a large fishing boat with a galley where short orders, snacks, and beverages are sold. Reservations must be received by Aug. 26. Cost per person per day, \$35 for members and family, \$45 for nonmembers of WFO. For details phone Ginger Johnson, (619) 223-7985.

CORRECTION

In *The GULL* for June on page 90 in *Back Yard Birder* a decimal point displacement distorted significantly. The sentence should have read: "Ten years ago a mere 100 acres of Douglas Fir was worth \$1,600,000.00!" and not \$1,600.00 as stated.

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

LAST CHANCE FOR THE RANCH

You only have a couple of weeks to see the herons and egrets at ACR. The Ranch closes on *July 16*, so rush out and share the joy of watching fledging birds take their first flight.

A GIFT FROM OUR FRIENDS

We wish to express our grateful appreciation for the generosity of the late

Marcel and Frieda Ehrer who remembered ACR most generously through a bequest from a trust in their names.

SPRING NOTES

The Tri-colored Blackbirds have returned to Livermore Marsh for a second year. While at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve, Snowy Egrets have returned for a second year, the heronry seems to have survived the Golden Eagle, tree frogs are experiencing a population boom, and water scorpions and giant waterbugs have appeared for the first time in the new Parson's Pond. If you don't know about giant waterbugs be sure to read Annie Dillard's account in *PILGRIM AT TINKER CREEK*. If nothing else, the prospect in sharing in an experience like hers should make you into an instant pond fanatic. And can you believe 10 ft. poison hemlock? Well, there are several at least this high in Volunteer Canyon. On the negative side, our skipper butterfly population remains depressed. These little golden darters once were numerous over our scrub and grasslands, but we've seen fewer than a dozen this year.

THANKS AGAIN

As the ACR public season comes to a close, we would like to take a few lines to thank those wonderful people who made our visits memorable. Thanks to the volunteer hosts who greeted us when we arrived and made us feel welcome. Thanks to the Ranch Guides who met us at the overlook and the pond, and who seemed to have just the right answers for those questions which always seem to come up when we visit the Ranch. And a very special thank you to Edris Cole and Tom Queer. Edris is the delightful lady who manages the bookstore. She seems to handle the most hectic situations with a pleasant and unflustered smile. Wait a minute—maybe she's the reason I always seem to come home from ACR with a pile of books, a few toys and no money. Tom is our Weekend Coordinator, who did a little of everything and made the whole thing work so smoothly. Finally, thanks to those of you who visited us this year, who shared our joy, who enjoy our trails, and who went away with fond memories.

—DAN MURPHY

GIFTS and BEQUESTS

FOR GGAS

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Field Trips

Gift of

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The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1250 Addison St., #107B, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.



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Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.